

# city college news

## Health symposium brings hot topic to front burner

George Brown is leading the charge towards much needed improvements in the health information system that could help in another SARS outbreak.

The Health Informatics Symposium, held on Feb. 4, 2004, addressed the need for all health-care professions, from medical to dental, to manage and share patient information more effectively.

The issue of health informatics, defined as "application of information technologies to optimize information management within all aspects of health care delivery," has become a hot topic not only in health care and IT but also in the media following the SARS crisis.

In November 2002, the Romanow Report addressed this issue and after SARS, the Naylor Report called for significant improvements in health informatics.

"The health information systems issue in Canada is so grave that we truly managed the public health-care crisis in Toronto with Post-it notes and boxes of paper," said Dr. Mary Ferguson-Paré, who was a member of the clinical advisory team during the SARS outbreak.



Dr. Mary Ferguson-Paré, one of the Health Informatics Symposium panelists, said progress in this area is long overdue.

"We don't have the capacity for information to be shared easily or readily."

More than 1,000 students and faculty from the Centres of Nursing, Health Sciences and Advanced Engineering Technologies filled the John Bassett Theatre at the Metro Convention Centre to listen and discuss this timely issue with some of the most qualified health informatics professionals.

Lorie Shekter-Wolfson, Dean of the Faculty of Community Services and Health Sciences, started the symposium with opening remarks and introduced new college president Anne Sado to welcome the students, faculty and industry members.

Keynote speaker, Mariana Catz, a former Technical Officer for the World Health Organization, moderated the panel which included Fran Richardson from the College of Dental Hygienists of Ontario, Dr. Matthew Morgan, the Director of Medical Informatics at Misys Healthcare, Richard Shekter, a medical malpractice lawyer and Dr. Ferguson-Paré, Chief Nurse Executive at the University Health Network.

Each expert spoke about how health informatics pertains to their line of work and why it is so badly needed. For example, Richardson talked about the need to bridge the communication gap between the oral health and the medical health professions so that dentists and doctors are both fully aware of their patients' health conditions and history.

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## Lecturer-in-Residence has something to talk about

From yoga to ancient Mexican history to the human rights of children, Benjamin Santamaria Ochoa can talk your ear off on just about anything.

The fact that Ochoa has so much knowledge that he is so eager to share makes him the perfect fit as George Brown's first Lecturer-in-Residence.

Ochoa came to Canada from Mexico in 2002 after his lawyer was killed and he was threatened for his involvement with her in human rights activism on behalf of children. When he arrived in Toronto, he joined PEN Canada, an organization that helps writers who have been silenced for what they choose to express with the written word.

Ochoa, an accomplished novelist, journalist, actor and human rights activist,

was granted a four-month placement at George Brown through the Centre for Community Services and Development and PEN's "Writer-in-Exile" program.



Benjamin Santamaria Ochoa is all smiles to be at George Brown College.

The placement is designed to give exiled writers, like Ochoa, a chance to make connections with journalistic and academic communities.

"It's a way to give us the opportunity to get Canadian experience, prepare for a real job and prepare for a regular life," he said.

Until April, Ochoa will be available for guest lectures, workshops and presentations on the human rights of children — a cause that he has committed himself to entirely.

"Children are the foundation of our society. They are seeds of hope but also seeds of hate and crime if we don't take care of them," he explained. "That's my commitment to children."

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# Technology's Liaison Office builds connections for students

For just about any industry or sector, one key to finding a job is who you know and who knows you.

That is why the Faculty of Technology established the Industry Liaison Office (ILO) last year to help connect George Brown students to industry leaders and employers.

Though the ILO has kept a modest profile with the rest of the college, it has made itself visible and accessible to the technology students and industry representatives for whom it was created.

"Our main aim is to get students in touch with the networks of professionals that

will help them find employment," said Nisha Panchal, Industry Liaison Manager.

The reason behind the establishment of the ILO is the fact that posted job openings account for only 10 to 15 per cent of all openings, said Panchal.

"The other 80-plus per cent of job opportunities never get posted but are accessed through the hidden job market," she said. "...via effective networking."

In the past year, the ILO has organized career panels for different sectors within technology like microelectronics, IT and building technologies,

site visits to various companies, information sessions, industry guest speakers and a faculty-wide career fair.

Although last year's fair drew more than 500 students and 25 organizations, Panchal said they are aiming for a bigger and better event on Feb. 24, 2004.

The ILO continues to hold career-focused events for its students throughout the winter term including a Career Fair Preparatory Workshop series in which students can get help with their resumes, job searches and interview skills before the event.

The Career Fair will be

followed up by Careers in Information Technology Week and Certified Engineering Technologists and Technicians Week. The ILO invites industry professionals to speak to students about the workforce, career options and how to gain experience.

The industry reps who participate on the career panels are able to see for themselves what George Brown graduates will have to offer and make important connections with them, Panchal said.

For more information on the ILO and its events, please go to <http://www.georgebrown.ca/ilo>.

## Lecturer-in-Residence

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Ochoa, who has his own incredible life story, is a true storyteller on behalf of those who cannot speak for themselves. He is passionate, genuine and never just talks at his audience but with them as some students have already seen.

"I taught two classes and at the end, some of the students were crying because we talked to each other," he said. "I am trying to share as much as I can with students, faculty and administrative staff at George Brown."

Ochoa, who has spent most of his life teaching about human rights, was appointed the first Ombudsman for the children of Mexico in 1997.

Though Ochoa had to come to Canada alone, leaving his two daughters, ages 15 and 20, in Mexico with their mother, he brought with him a wealth of knowledge, a fiery passion for life and strong hope for the future.

And he is here to share it all with us at George Brown.

## Student Life Cycle offers incentive for student feedback



Liz Dantas (right), from Student Life Cycle, hands Ambreen Faizan a new DVD player, which she won just for filling out a winter start-up survey.

Sometimes it pays off to give someone a piece of your mind.

Just ask George Brown student Ambreen Faizan who won a DVD player for filling out the most recent start-up survey.

The Student Life Cycle (SLC), which administers the semi-annual survey, rewarded student response with a chance to win a DVD player by simply filling out the questionnaire and giving feedback on their start-up experience, said Brenda Pipitone, SLC Leader.

During the first week of January, 187 students from St. James and Casa Loma filled out the survey and the results are now out.

And like in September, the winter start-up team deserves a big round of applause.

Ninety-two per cent of the students surveyed were 'satisfied to very satisfied' with the overall process and physical environment that they encountered during the first week of the winter semester.

Start-up staff scored high

in specific areas like demonstrating a thorough knowledge (94 per cent), showing interest in the students (90.5 per cent), answering questions clearly (90.5 per cent) and greeting students as they enter the college (84.5 per cent).

Students were also 'satisfied to very satisfied' with the signage (91.5 per cent) and waiting time for services (73 per cent).

Pipitone said these results are very encouraging.

"It is nice to see the efforts of the frontline staff being recognized by the students," she said. "In a small way, this lets us know we are on the right track."

Using focus groups and surveys, the Student Life Cycle will continue to ask students for feedback on new and existing services or facilities that are brought into the college.

"We want more student input," she said. "The more opportunities there are for them to tell us (what they think), the better."

# Staff, students celebrate arts successes



James Simon (left), Co-ordinating Director of the Theatre School, shows Andy McKim (middle), Associate Artistic Director of the Tarragon Theatre and Patricia Hamilton (right), Shaw Festival actor and Theatre School Advisory Committee member, the floor plans and designs for the new facility.

Even though the Distillery District has been dubbed a summer hotspot, it has had its share of winter visitors, especially from George Brown.

On Jan. 29, the George Brown Theatre School celebrated its partnership with Soulpepper Theatre Company and unveiled the designs for the Young Centre for Performing Arts at the historic Distillery District.

The event drew theatre school students, college faculty, staff and administration, members of the theatre community, Soulpepper and the architectural design team from Kuwabara, Payne, McKenna and Blumberg (KPMB).

Guests mingled in the RealTime gallery space, checking out the architectural designs and floor plans displayed on the walls.

There was excited chatter among the theatre students as they saw for the first time what their new building, just around the corner from RealTime, would look like in Sept. 2005.

"We're all very, very excited," said Jennifer Harding, a first-year Theatre Arts student.

"I think it's great to have this event open to the students. It's nice to put our feet on the ground where we'll be performing for the next few years."

Speakers for the evening included Maureen Loweth,

Dean of the Faculty of Business and Creative Arts, new college president Anne Sado, Albert Schultz, artistic director of Soulpepper Theatre, Tom Payne, the architect for the new facility and James Simon, Co-ordinating Director of the Theatre School.

"We're just starting the project but it's been very exciting," said Payne about his firm's role in the initiative. "We're creating a new paradigm for the world of education and performing arts. It's where the theatre meets the academy."

The stage is not the only place where the classroom is mixing with the real world.

The second event held at RealTime celebrated the inaugural graduating class of the Institute without Boundaries — a partnership between George Brown's School of Design and world-famous designer Bruce Mau.

The reception, originally set for Jan. 27, was cancelled due to bad weather and rescheduled for Feb. 3. It too drew a crowd of students, faculty and staff, mingling with members of the community and industry.

The Institute without Boundaries students spent the last year working in Bruce Mau's downtown studios on a multi-disciplinary project called Massive Change for which they researched, devel-



From left to right: Maureen Loweth and Luigi Ferrara join Greg Van Alstyne, Director of Institute without Boundaries, design students Vannessa Ahuactzin, Alejandro Quinto, Jennifer Leonard, Lorraine Gauthier, Mark Beaver, Tyler Millard and Bruce Mau.

oped and produced a number of elements including a Web site, a feature film, product line and a radio show — all of which were designed to bring about positive change in local and global communities.

Several of the projects and designs were on display for the reception which included

speakers Luigi Ferrara, Director of the School of Design, Anne Sado, Maureen Loweth and Bruce Mau, who presented an overview of the Massive Change project.

To learn more about this unique program, go to [http:// www.institutewithoutboundaries.com](http://www.institutewithoutboundaries.com).

## Safe Walk program — don't leave school without it

As most college staff and faculty know, the day doesn't always end at 5 o'clock sharp even if it began long before 9 a.m.

And often times, it is well after dusk when that evening committee meeting, night course or college event ends.

That is why Cathy Desabrais, Safe Walk Program Co-ordinator, is reminding staff and faculty that there is a way to ensure a safe arrival at your car, subway station or streetcar.

"If you are coming to evening college events, please remember to use the Safe Walk program," said Desabrais.

The service runs from Monday to Friday from 6:30 p.m. to 11:15 p.m. Co-ed escort teams leave from the lobbies of 200 King St., 300 Adelaide St. and the Davenport Rd. exit at Casa Loma every 15 minutes. The escorts walk to nearby parking lots, the King-Jarvis streetcar at St. James and the Dupont subway station at Casa Loma.

The program runs until April 14, 2004 and resumes on Sept. 2, 2004 with a break in service during Winter Intersession Week from Feb. 23 to 27.

The Safe Walk program, a joint initiative between the Student Association and George Brown College, was established in October 2002 to create a more secure environment for the college community.

"The first year has been really successful," said Desabrais, though she would like to see more people using the service which currently gets about 150 users a month. "(We) hope that the more people are informed, the more the usage will increase."

A schedule of departures is available at <http://www.gbrowncollege.ca/orientation/safewalk.html> or to have a schedule e-mailed, write to [safewalk@gbrowncollege.ca](mailto:safewalk@gbrowncollege.ca).

## Around George Brown

On Feb. 6, **Continuing Education** received a generous donation of \$10,000 from the **RBC Foundation** — a division of RBC Investments® — that will be issued to qualifying students in the **Financial Planning Certificate program**. RBC has been very impressed with the knowledge and skills of recent George Brown graduates who have been hired by the financial institution, said **Munir Noormohamed**, Business Co-ordinator in the Centre for Continuous Learning. Continuing Education will set up a bursary program with the donation to award students over a number of years.

On Jan. 26, the **Chef School** invited popular Food Network Canada host **Christine Cushing** and food journalist/producer **Tanya Linton** to talk to George Brown **Chef School** students about cooking and careers. Seated before a full audience in the Canadian Pacific Culinary Lecture Theatre, Cushing and Linton chatted to the students about what their jobs entail, what they did to get to where they are now and what career options and opportunities are out there in food and lifestyle media. Students were eager to hear details about everything from what a resume should like to how recipes are tested for a cooking show to how to get a job at Food Network Canada. For more photos of this event, please go to <http://www.gbrownc.on.ca/whatsnew.html>.



Christine Cushing (left) and Tanya Linton (right) talk shop with Chef School students.

**Helene Vukovich**, Director of School of Business/CFSE, recently had her own close encounter with a local television personality. On Jan. 29, **OMNI TV's Adriana Monti** and crew came to George Brown to interview Vukovich for the Italian program, **Noi Oggi**. Speaking in Italian, Vukovich talked about her family's background, her experiences playing professional volleyball in Italy, her local band called the Moanin' Bones, her business career and her current position at George Brown College. During the interview, she took the opportunity to highlight the college's diverse reputation and its international partnerships particularly with ALMA, the culinary school in Parma, Italy. The feature on Vukovich aired on OMNI 1 (channel 4) on Feb. 6 and Feb. 8.



## Health symposium (continued from page 1)

Shekter, taking a different perspective on health informatics, addressed the important issue of privacy, how it would affect the use of electronic medical health records and the risk of confidential information ending up on the Internet.

Following the presentations, students and faculty were given the chance to ask the panelists specific questions about health informatics and how it will affect them once they enter the field.

"I thought it was very informative," said Laura Perri, a Dental Hygiene student, at the reception following the event. "I'm happy that I attended."

Nursing professor, Gail Pahwa, was also impressed with the discussion.

"I thought it was an excellent symposium. It was very timely and pointed to issues that health care is currently facing," she said. "There is a need (to talk about) confidentiality and privacy issues and it's important not to lose sight of that."

## Upcoming events

**George Brown Theatre presents *All's Well That Ends Well* Feb. 11 to 21**

George Brown Theatre School's current graduating class will showcase their talent and skill with *All's Well That Ends Well*, one of Shakespeare's darkest and most elusive comedies, under the directorship of veteran actor/director and Soulepper founding member Joseph Zielger. Set and costumes for this rarely performed production have been designed by Angelija Djuric with lighting designed by Julia Vandergraaf. For tickets, please call the Box Office at (416) 415-5000, ext. 2167.

**The 3rd annual production of *The Vagina Monologues* Feb. 12 & 13 (7:30 p.m.)**

George Brown students in the Assaulted Women and Children Counsellor/Advocate program will perform Eve Ensler's groundbreaking play at St. James in rm. 128. Proceeds will go to the AWCCA Student Emergency fund, a no-interest short-term loan for students in the program. Tickets are \$10 or pay what you can. Please contact Jill Hornick at (416) 415-5000, ext. 3531 or [jhornick@gbrownc.on.ca](mailto:jhornick@gbrownc.on.ca) for more information.

**Faculty of Technology Career Fair**

**Feb. 24 (10 a.m. to 2 p.m.)**

The Industry Liaison Office will host the second annual Technology Career Fair at Casa Loma for students to learn more about careers in technology and make connections with industry professionals and organizations. Career Fair Preparatory Workshops will be held before the event for students to brush up on their resume writing, interview skills and job-hunting know-how.

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